

as the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America and the American Coalition for Missing Israeli Soldiers. These groups have been at the forefront of this pursuit of justice. I want to recognize their good work and ask my colleagues to join me in supporting their efforts. For 14 years, these families have been without their children. Answers are long overdue.

JUNETEENTH CELEBRATION JUNE
21, 1996

HON. BARBARA B. KENNELLY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 13, 1996

Mrs. KENNELLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to celebrate one of Connecticut's most treasured African-American celebrations to be held in Hartford, CT, on June 21, 1996—the Annual Juneteenth Celebration.

Juneteenth is celebrated traditionally on June 19th and is this Nation's oldest African-American celebration. Originally celebrated in Texas, whereas in 1865 that enslaved Africans were formally notified of their freedom, literally 2½ years after the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation by President Lincoln.

This Texas celebration has become the model to similar events in other States. Held annually at the Wadsworth Atheneum, Juneteenth attracts thousands to the museum and proudly preserves and furthers the rich heritage and traditions of Connecticut's African-Americans. A 2-day celebration, Juneteenth offers a parade, historical perspectives, the Discovering Ellis Ruley exhibition, family day festivities, vibrant musicians, and benefits the Wadsworth Atheneum Amistad Foundation's African-American collection. Viewed by some as one of the Nation's outstanding records of the black experience in America, this 6,000 piece collection illuminates the brilliance of African-American artists and their contributions to American art and culture.

This gala affair is presented jointly by the Wadsworth Atheneum's Amistad Foundation director and curator Deirdre Libby and the 1996 Juneteenth Jubilee Committee. Thanks should be given to all the members of the 1996 Juneteenth Committee, who have worked so hard to make this year's event a wonderful success. Special thanks goes to: 1996 cochairs Barbara Alleyne and Peter Roach, and members Sylvia Alexander, Charles Barrow, Alvin Bingham, Sondra Brittain, Carolyn H. Burney, Kristen Clark, C. Jeanne Costley, Diane Jackson, Ann Jennings, Darlene Leak, Winnie Johnson, Bunny Jones, Alice and Duane Luster, Claire Odoms, Genie Odoms, Loretta Pair, Joyce Peoples, Kelly Pittman, Alyce T. Rawlins, Randolph Ricketts, Sara Roach, Andrea B. Seldon, Tanya Sharpe, Mildred Smith, Marilyn Strong, Carolyn Thomas, Patricia Wiggings, and Alberta Mendenhall.

All Americans are enriched by the African-American experience. The courage, the faith, the fortitude in the face of enormous obstacles, and above, all, the dedication to freedom should inspire all of us. The Juneteenth celebration is a joyful and uplifting community event, one that will strengthen our ties to our fellow Americans.

TRIBUTE TO STATE REPRESENTATIVE
SHARON L. GIRE

HON. DAVID E. BONIOR

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 13, 1996

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to my good friend and my State representative, Sharon Gire. I am pleased and proud to have Sharon represent the district that I served in the 1970's. Sharon will be honored on Friday, June 14, at the Daughters of Isabella, Queen of the Skies Circle No. 683 annual testimonial dinner in Mount Clemens. This event is held each year to recognize a community leader or outstanding service and to raise funds for charity.

Sharon has always been a strong advocate for victims of domestic abuse and a staunch supporter of children's rights. Her long commitment to children is apparent when you consider her background. She has served as the Macomb area supervisor of the Big Brothers/Big Sisters organization, and was also the program director at the YWCA. As a State legislator, she continues to focus on the immediate concerns of women and children. One of her proudest moments was the development of a 14-bill package aimed at reforming domestic violence laws. Recently, she assisted members of the Macomb Domestic Violence Council with legislation regarding personal protection orders.

Taking an active role in one's community is a responsibility we all share, but few fulfill. Sharon has dedicated much of her life to this endeavor. I deeply admire her strong values and outstanding example of civic involvement. Among the many organizations that she is currently serving are the Clinton Township Goodfellows, Catholic Social Services Advisory Committee, and Citizen's for Better Care. Her time, talents, and energy are appreciated by all of us. I thank Sharon for all her efforts and commend her for her good work.

I applaud the Daughters of Isabella for recognizing Sharon Gire. She has provided outstanding leadership to our community and I know she is proud to be honored by this fine organization. On behalf of the Daughters of Isabella Queen of the Skies Circle No. 683, I urge my colleagues to join me in saluting State Representative Sharon L. Gire.

TRIBUTE TO PIA HARRIS, SAN
MARCOS, CA, TEACHER OF THE
YEAR

HON. RANDY "DUKE" CUNNINGHAM

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 13, 1996

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Speaker, I would like to pay tribute to Mrs. Pia Harris, a teacher at Alvin Dunn Elementary School in my congressional district, who has been named San Marcos, CA, Teacher of the Year.

Excellent education gives our young people a fighting chance at the American dream. Our communities and our country benefit from the work of outstanding teachers. As a former teacher and coach, as a dad, and as chairman of the House Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Youth and Families, I am thankful for Mrs. Harris' work.

I ask that the permanent Record of the Congress of the United States include the following article, from the May 1, 1996, North County Times, in appreciation for the honor bestowed upon Pia Harris by the San Marcos Unified School District.

[From the Northern County Times, May, 1996]

DUNN ELEMENTARY INSTRUCTOR NAMED SM
TEACHER OF YEAR

(By Sandra San Agustin)

SAN MARCOS.—After raising 10 children, Pia Harris decided he had enough practical experience to become a teacher.

She had been a PTA member, a Brownie leader and a school aide.

When she hit her 40s, she went back to school and obtained a college education and her teaching credential.

On Friday, the Alvin Dunn Elementary School teacher received the "Teacher of the Year" award at the San Marcos Unified School District's employee recognition dinner.

"I'm very, very honored to be chosen for such a wonderful award," said the Swedish native. "There are so many excellent teachers out there that also deserve it."

Harris' husband, Pat Ebert and a handful of parents surprised the fifth-grade teacher with a small party in her classroom on Tuesday morning.

Former students joined Harris' class in congratulating her for winning the award.

"It was because of each of you that I was chosen (Teacher of the Year)," a teary-eyed Harris told the group.

Parents and students alike said Harris deserved the award because she makes learning fun and sincerely cares for the children.

"If you always complete your work and forget something one day, she lets you slide by," said Kyle Dodson, 11. "She always gives you a chance."

When Kathy Rocha's 10-year old daughter, Caity, entered the fifth grade, Rocha pushed to have her placed in Harris' class.

Her other daughter, Lisa, had been Harris' student a few years back.

"(Harris) loves her students with all her heart and is always hugging them," Rocha said. "At this age, the children are usually standoffish, but they love her."

Harris moved to the United States when she was 21 and settled in Southern California.

A champion of higher education, she decided to become a teacher because of the influence she would have on children.

"Education doesn't stop within the classroom," said the 26-year San Marcos resident, "I often encourage students and their parents to get involved in the community."

Besides teaching, Harris is also president of the San Marcos teacher's union, a member of the San Marcos Educational Foundation, direct of the North County Transit District board, and is serving her fourth term as a San Marcos City Council member.

IN HONOR OF THE BRAVE CREW
OF THE RB-29 #44 61810

HON. JON D. FOX

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 13, 1996

Mr. FOX. Mr. Speaker, on June 13, 1952, alone, unarmed, and unafraid, a crew of 12 men flying a sensitive reconnaissance mission over the Sea of Japan was engaged and shot down by two Soviet MIG-15 jet fighters, near